

## **Integration Joint Board**

**Date of Meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

**Title of Report: HR Resourcing**

**Presented by: Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services**

### **The Integration Joint Board is asked to:**

- Note the current HR team structure and capacity
- Note the increase in current and future HR demands from service change, policy change and Culture Fit for Future outcomes
- Note the impact on the HSCP of under-supported managers, employees and TU/SS
- Approve the proposal for increased resource (temporary and permanent) for the HSCP HR team as set out in para 3.14 totalling £104,585.95

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The HROD team is dealing with increased demands from service change, national policy changes and Culture Fit for the Future outcomes and this is impacting on the team's capacity to deliver. This report proposes an increase in temporary and permanent HR resources to ensure that the team can fully support managers, employees and staffside colleagues and reduce risk to the HSCP.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

This paper presents the IJB with an update on the reports submitted to SLT on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 taking into account feedback from SLT specifically around being clear on what an increase in HR resources will achieve and the issues that will be sorted or minimised by further investment by the HSCP.

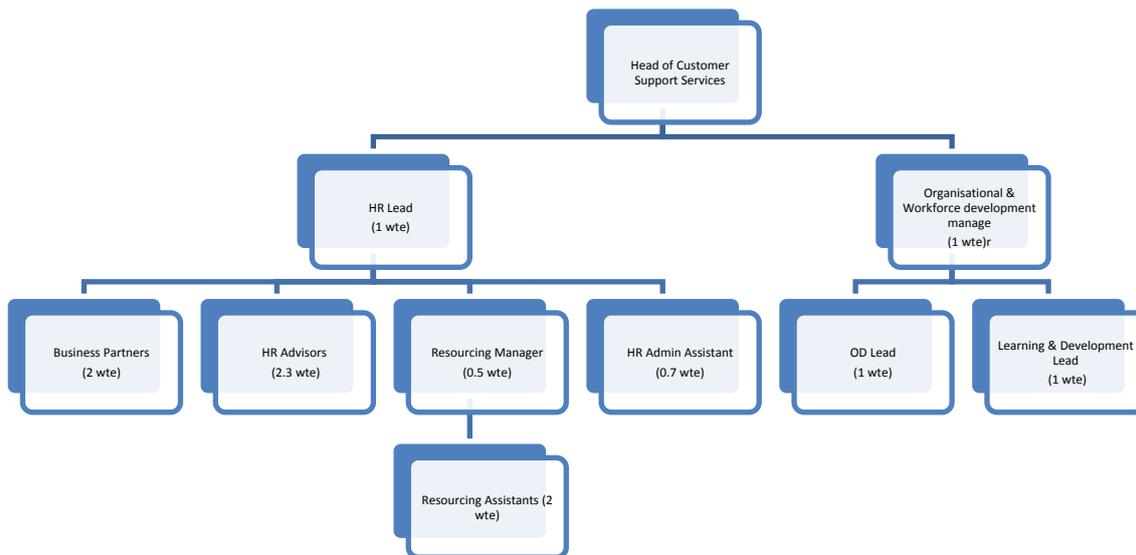
## **3. DETAIL OF REPORT**

- 3.1 Following agreement between the two parent bodies, it was decided that in the interests of improved people management in the HSCP, the HR service for Argyll and Bute HSCP would be integrated and be under the leadership of the Council's Head of Customer Support Services. This has been in place since 1 September 2019.

3.2 The HR team works closely alongside the 3 person OD team. This report focuses solely on HR capacity.

3.3 The HR team consists of:

- Operational HR - 6 wte staff – 1 wte band 7, 2 wte band 6, 2.3 wte band 5 (one temp) and 0.7 wte band 4.
- Recruitment - 2.5 WTE staff – 0.5 wte band 5 and 2 wte band 3
- ABC HR Officer – 0.5 FTE LGE11



The team delivers:

- Operational HR support and guidance – Employee Relations, Organisational Change, Redeployment, Fixed Term Contracts, Absence, Maternity, Relocation and Terms & Conditions of Service.
- Recruitment – all recruitment, excluding medical staffing, for staff employed by NHS Highland in the Argyll & Bute HSCP
- All associated contractual documents
- Attendance management support including OHS referrals advice, ill-health retiral, reasonable adjustments etc.
- Representation at all NESH HR Sub and T&C's Sub groups, HPF and working groups
- Support for staff liaison, JPF and other ad hoc TU/SS meetings
- Roll out of NESH initiatives and policy changes such as TURAS, Learnpro and JobTrain to date.
- Business Partner support at management team meetings.
- HR advice on and participation in change management SLWGs and other working groups
- Workforce Monitoring

The HR Officer in the Council carries out the HR advice, change, redesign and attendance management elements of the above. Other parts of the Council's HROD team are not HSCP specific and deal with pay, pensions, policy, ER, attendance management, policy change, procedures, recruitment etc.

3.4 HR Advisory support is allocated across the HSCP as follows:

**HR Lead and HR Adviser**

Helensburgh & Lomond  
Cowal & Bute  
Dental  
HR

**HR Business Partner, HR Adviser (temp)**

Oban, Lorn & Islands  
Children & Families  
Estates

**HR Business Partner, HR Adviser (0.5 wte)**

Mid Argyll, Kintyre & Islay  
Mental Health  
Corporate (excluding HR)

The Council's 0.5 FTE HR Officer covers the entire Argyll and Bute area – i.e. all Children and Families, Adult Services and Council employees in Strategic Planning and Performance.

- 3.5 As reported previously the team has recently recruited to the part time Admin Assistant post. This is an essential part of the team and has been vacant for some time, putting significant pressure on the team to maintain service delivery. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Admin Assistant has been temporarily deployed to MAKI to assist with Admin support there.

**3.6 HR Adviser (Temp) Post**

This post was originally established with funding within the Investment fund in October 2017. The premise of the post was to support the redesigns that required to be undertaken over the next 2 years. Other than Estates Review, this work did not transpire but other work was undertaken by the post holder including support covering:

- ER investigations
- Advice to line managers for sickness absence
- Informal interventions such as facilitated discussion, informal mediation
- Providing HR data and analysis for staff governance reporting to IJB

The post holder was also assigned as Co-ordinator for LearnPro in Argyll & Bute. This entails ensuring A&B's staff have a single point of contact to get guidance and support on the system. The HR Advisor managed the roll-out of the updated Learnpro capability to ensure statutory and mandatory training is the focus for improvement in terms of take up.

In consultation with Finance, we identified sufficient additional resource from within the small HROD budget to extend this post for a further 6 months at the end of the original 2 year FTC. This was done as an emergency measure to cover long-term absence within the team.

Another extension for a further 3 months was recently approved by workforce monitoring due to the nature and volume of current and future HR workload which takes the term to end of June 2020 equating to 2 years and 9 months service by the post holder.

### **3.7 HR Lead Capacity**

After Shared Services was established, in addition to the existing role requirements, this role took on formal responsibility for overseeing recruitment, where previously it was managed by the Head of Service.

The HR Lead also manages a full employee relations caseload as well as meeting the management demands of a busy team, liaising on complex cases with NHS HR, participating in the NHS and HSCP HR and staff side governance structures/meetings, advising on change, leading on the implementation of new policy and procedures and managing an increasing volume of TU/SS correspondence. The level of activity relating to policy change, team management, organisational change and restructure is significant alongside the progression of ER caseloads is a significant challenge in this context.

### **3.8 Employee Relations Caseload**

The team has seen ER cases double over the last 12 months. Despite cases being completed each month, there continue to be new cases coming on stream. This is evidenced in quarter 3 where we completed 3 cases but another 4 were started. Timescales for undertaking all HR processes have been longer than previous policy dictates for a number of reasons i.e. availability of managers, trained Investigating Officers and HR support. It must be stressed that the HR Team prioritise all ER work above all else so are rarely unable to accommodate dates for meetings etc.

Overall workloads are impacting on managers' availability to investigate, report on and participate in employee relations cases is a challenge which has resulted from pressure on resources and their time and also the temporary management arrangements that are in place pending the implementation of the management restructure.

The temporary management arrangements could be contributing to an increasing number of ER cases coming forward. The ongoing programme

of change and redesign also has an impact on our employees and could again be contributing to the increasing number of ER cases.

The team is seeing an increase in the number of formal ER processes as opposed to informal, which is increasing resource demands.

The Culture Fit for the Future work, post-Sturrock, and the current Argyll and Bute Engagement exercise (culture survey) are and will continue to increase demands on the team for ER investigations, appeals, informal support and mediation, advice to management and staff and actions required as part of the CFFTF action plan.

It is acknowledged that our HR process timescales require to be significantly improved and become “reasonable” which is referred to in the new “Once for Scotland” Workforce Policies.

### **3.9 Once for Scotland Workforce Policies Roll Out**

The consultation and roll-out of all NHS PIN Policies, which are being revised, will have a significant impact on the HR & OD Team, as support for training is expected from HR Business Partners and HR Advisers to ensure that all line managers have knowledge and understanding of the changes to the policies.

The most significant change is to the Attendance and Investigation Process, however training for managers in HR processes has been needed over a number of years so this is the ideal opportunity to start filling this gap in knowledge, skills and experience. The first phase covering the Core Policies will require significant input by the HR Team to support the implementation and training for these policies. This will be joint training with TU/Staffside.

It should be noted that the Once for Scotland policies dictate the level of HR support that should be provided and therefore we cannot review the level of HR involvement locally. In contrast, the Council can amend their processes locally after agreement with TUs.

The second phase is currently being consulted on and involves revising 23 NHS PIN Policies covering Work Life Balance Policies such as Special Leave, Parental Leave etc. It’s envisaged that the implementation date for the roll-out will be 1st March 2021 at the latest. A third and final phase is expected after this. This phased plan demonstrates that there is a continuing demand on HR & OD in regards to this area of work over the next couple of years.

Universal understanding, effective training and consistent implementation of the Once for Scotland policies and procedures is an extremely important step for the HSCP to take in building confidence amongst colleagues in our people processes.

### **3.10 Organisational Change/Redesigns**

The complexity of supporting change management in the HSCP is increasingly placing additional demands on the team. The recent Children and Families Management restructure implementation has been completed with an implementation date of 1 July 2020, however the work involved in supporting the necessary HR processes was considerable such as:

- Developing new joint HR process for TU/Mgt consideration and approval
- Support in 1 to1 interviews with managers
- Preparation of paperwork for matching panels for Integrated posts, NHS and Council posts from expression of interest submissions;
- Supporting matching panels and confirming matches with relevant managers

This work was supported by 1 HR BP, and 2 team members virtually for the all time taken which was approximately six months. The process for implementing the Adult Services redesign will be more involved due to the increased number of integrated and non integrated posts. An estimate of time to complete this is nine months. This clearly demonstrates the resource required around redesign and it is expected and required that other major redesigns will require similar HR support from NHS and Council HR.

### **3.11 TU/Staffside Relations**

The current environment of change in the HSCP is contributing to an intensification of relations between HR and staff side. Some ER cases are particularly complex with protracted, written correspondence associated with them and this can be in part linked to the issues highlighted above regarding time taken to progress ER cases. However, this is time consuming for both sides without necessarily reaching a satisfactory resolution. It is anticipated that the roll out of Once for Scotland Policies will support an improvement in this, with an increase in informal resolution at an early stage. Essential to this is the HR and mediation support the team can deliver alongside well trained and confident managers alongside our colleagues in staff side.

The staff governance procedures and arrangements in the integration environment are still complex and bureaucratic. Further work is required to simplify these to support better management of change in partnership and staffside colleagues are committed to working constructively with HR and management to improve this.

### **Resourcing the HSCP HR Team**

The current pressure on the HR Team is one that is, as set out above, driven by the current environment that the HSCP is operating in. It is anticipated that this is a temporary situation that will be improved by a number of measures over the next 2 year period.

The management structure implementation and stabilises, as the engagement exercise progresses and as we develop improvement actions and a positive and improved culture, it is anticipated that the current critical situation facing HR will resolve itself and a new 'norm' of more settled employee relations will be established. It is likely, however, that change will remain with us and the HR team must be in a position to be able to continue to support the HSCP to manage this.

- 3.12 In order to stabilise the HR team and manage the current and projected future demands of change and CFFTF over the next period, this paper notes that SLT agreed the following request for additional temporary resource:

**Proposal: 1 x Band 6 HR Business Partner (temp 23 months)**

**Rationale** – to remove HR case load from the HR Lead and enable them to focus on management, provide professional and general support, liaison with NHSH HRD and team, strategic change management procedures, revised staff governance, reports to IJB and SLT, overview and analysis of improvements, lead in liaising with TU/SS to try and deal with issues at a lower level rather than being escalated to Inverness as is the current situation.

The recurring cost of this provision is £43,600 per annum plus £1000 travel allow.

**Proposal: 1 x Band 5 HR Adviser permanent (currently temp)**

**Rationale** – the size of the organisation and the complexity of staffing groups requires permanent resource and resilience at the HRA level. The team will not be able to meet policy timescale targets for ER cases without this post at the normal level of demand. In addition, the work associated with Learnpro would need to be reallocated to another post within the HR/OD side as this was determined by NHSH in Inverness as an essential requirement within HR & OD function within A&B.

The recurring cost of this provision is £35,400 per annum plus £1000 travel allow.

**Proposal: 0.5 FTE LGE11 HR Officer (temp 23 months)**

**Rationale** – the current Business partner resource for the HSCP from the Council team (equivalent to the other BP level of resource) is not proving sufficient to manage the current levels of absence and amount of change in the HSCP. The postholder attends service management teams, advises on change processes for council employees, contributes to integrated procedures, supports statutory consultation duties, reports on detailed absence etc.

The recurring cost of this provision is £25,585.95 per annum.

- 3.13 The NHSH HR Director and the Head of Customer Support Services keep in regular contact and this proposed change has been discussed. Any future changes to structure either in NHSH or in Argyll and Bute will be discussed fully with engagement where appropriate.

### 3.14 Targeted Improvements

The benefits and improvements for the HSCP associated with investing in more resources within HR & OD at this time are as follows:

- Attending SLT/ Senior Management team meetings and providing high level HR advice to ensure strategic oversight of all people issues within HSCP
- Provide professional HR advice to local managers to help ensure absence, ER cases, FTC etc, are being managed in accordance with HR Policy and definitive and reasonable timescales are being met:
  - Once for Scotland roll-out and training
  - eESS and SSTS roll out leading to more effective and efficient ways of working e.g. online Manager and Employee self service
  - Reduction of absence levels. New absence management policy with 4 stage process for escalation should facilitate this, with HR support.
  - Target for completion of single process investigations within 18 weeks be 50% year 1 and 75% in year 2. These targets would be subject to A&B HSCP following North Highland and A&B Council practice of Senior Management ownership of ER cases.
- Reduce organisational and reputational risk including potential costs associated with litigation and Tribunal cases (£60,000 was paid out to former staff last year in settlements pre-Tribunal)
- Spending sufficient and appropriate time to guide and coach managers in soft skills to minimise issues escalating to formal processes, e.g. courageous conversations.
- Improve the culture of the organisation by increasing the amount of proactive HR work to ensure staff are well managed
- Provide more focus and resource for strategic input to recruitment challenges particularly around hard to fill posts e.g. Nursing and AHP posts.
- Supporting recruiting managers with roll-out of Job Train for all internal and external posts which will have a positive effect on existing timescales for recruitment i.e. average of 5.5 weeks internal, 15.5 weeks external. Target would be 4 weeks and 12 weeks respectively.

## Total Cost Overall

	Annual employment cost	Annual travel allowance
1 x Band 6 HR Business Partner (temp 23 months)	£43,600.00	£1000
1 x Band 5 HR Adviser permanent	£35,400.00	£1000
0.5 FTE LGE11 HR Officer (temp 23 months)	£25,585.95	-
<b>TOTAL COST per year</b>	<b>£104,585.95</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>

## 4 RELEVANT DATA AND INDICATORS

SMART delivery measures are being developed for regular reporting.

## 5 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Effective HR is essential to supporting a stable workforce, to ensure recruitment is processed, to manage employee relations, to facilitate change, to facilitate relations with the Trade Unions and ensure that change is progressed in line with policy and procedure.

## 6 GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 Financial Impact

No additional financial implications. SLT propose that the costs will be met through pro-rata top slicing existing budgets.

Potentially the additional investment in the HR team could reduce the likelihood of ER related settlement pay outs, absence costs and save money in the longer term.

### 6.2 Staff Governance

Effective and fair recruitment of staff is a core element of ensuring appropriate staff governance

### 6.3 Clinical Governance

None

## 7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The proposal raises no adverse EQIA issues.

## 8. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES COMPLIANCE

None

## 9. RISK ASSESSMENT

An under-resourced HR service presents a risk to the HSCP in managing and delivering change, in ensuring compliance with statutory policies and procedures and in managing employee relations.

## 10. PUBLIC & USER INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT

None

## 11. CONCLUSIONS

The paper presents a proposal for a temporary and small permanent increase in the resource available to the HSCP HR Team. This is to address the current and anticipated increase in ER cases as a result of change and the Argyll and Bute engagement exercise, the roll out of once for Scotland policies and procedures and the implementation of service restructures.

It is anticipated that the majority of this work will reduce over the 2 year period and a 'steady state' in the Team will be established, resulting in the removal of the temporary resource at that stage.

SLT considered the report and agreed to recommend to the IJB a funding arrangement based on pro rata allocation of existing budgets.

## 12. DIRECTIONS

Directions required to Council, NHS Board or both.	<b>Directions to:</b>	tick
	No Directions required	
	Argyll & Bute Council	
	NHS Highland Health Board	
	Argyll & Bute Council and NHS Highland Health Board	x

The paper highlights the impacts both financially and on stakeholder groups in line with statutory guidance on direction. We would seek to progress to delivery of the direction with immediate effect pending IJB support.

The IJB directs NHS Highland to move to recruit 2 staff as follows:

**1 x Band 6 HR Business Partner (temp 23 months)**

**1 x Band 5 HR Adviser permanent (currently temp)**

The IJB directs Argyll and Bute Council to move to recruit 1 employee as follows:

**0.5 FTE LGE11 HR Officer (temp 23 months)**

## REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTACT

Author Name: Charlie Gibson, HR Lead; Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services

Email: [Charlie.gibson@nhs.net](mailto:Charlie.gibson@nhs.net); jane.fowler@argyll-bute.gov.uk